

OUT OF THE RUT

IDEAS AND ACTIVITIES IN BRIEF.

We are now in receipt of the figures relating to the "Grand Bazaar" held by the Accrington Trades and Labour Party at the latter end of November. The bazaar was a four days' event, and no less a sum than £3,109 was taken. The nett proceeds amounted to £1,864, and this is to be earmarked for a new building. For the benefit of those whose eyes will open wide at these figures it may be mentioned that an even larger effort is in contemplation to be held while the new building is in course of erection. Only 2,293 votes separated Mr. C. Roden Buxton from victory in 1924 on a total poll of nearly 40,000, and we can well imagine that efforts like the one above mentioned justify the Labour agent, Mr. William Howson, who informs us in a matter of fact way that "we are working quietly and without fuss trying to make Accrington a safe seat for Labour, and longing for the next election to come round!" Incidentally, we may mention that the bazaar programme was a 96-page art production, replete with advertisements, and in itself, we should imagine, a profitable venture.

Circulars have been issued by the Head Office of the Labour Party relating to the Annual National Conference of Labour Women, which this year is to be held in the Town Hall, Huddersfield, on May 12th and 13th. As usual the conference will be preceded by a business conference of delegates of Women's Sections, which will be held on Tuesday, May 11th. We trust once again that Local Labour Parties will see to it that the Women's Sections have opportunities for appointing delegates. It will be short-sighted policy not to afford every facility, if desired, for every Women's Section to be represented.

The Bolton and District Association of Registration Officials is evidently a useful and important body. We note that it has a membership of 42, no fewer than 34 of whom replied to a recent circular. The chairman is Mr. H.

Eastwood, Labour Agent at Bolton. There seems a note of prophecy about the following sentence which appears in their last circular:—"The present Government's intention with regard to eliminating all the votes of those who obtain relief, etc., will have to be carefully considered, and we venture to suggest that discussion on the proposals, when issued, will be very helpful, and materially assist in a right understanding of the whole position."

A budget of hand and window bills and posters which reaches us from the Peckham Labour Party indicates that a "Grand Boxing Tournament" is to be held on February 18th, 1926, under the auspices of the Local Party. Hugh Dalton, M.P., is advertised to be present, and the prices of admission range from 1/3 to 5/9. We presume the profits are to go to Party funds, but if we are asked to commend this enterprise let us say quite frankly that its appearance in "Out of the Rut" conveys no commendation from us. Just as we detest the betting tips on which a certain Labour paper has unfortunately to depend on for an important portion of its circulation, so do we detest the brutalising "sport" of boxing and the degradations inseparable from its practice. From the handbills mentioned we note that "medical men will be in attendance," and self-condemnation could hardly go further. Is there no better work for doctors and surgeons than the patching up of wilfully bruised and broken human bodies done for the delight of Labour applauders, and to the benefit of Labour Party funds? We trust the example of the Peckham Labour Party will not be followed.

We wonder in how many constituencies the Labour agent or secretary has drawn up a tabular statement showing the electorate in each polling district and the estimated number of votes obtained therein, i.e., the number of Labour supporters. Probably not many. We have before

us, however, just such a statement of Labour's position in the North Norfolk Division, and a mere glance at the figures shows how valuable such information may be in the work of practical organisation. At a glance the weak places show up; the consideration of local Government candidatures may be entered upon in the light of definite data, and the figures can be tested from time to time; places ripe for Membership Campaigns advertise their opportunities in this list; and the

dead holes, where propaganda must be done quickly, shout for attention.

We give below an extract from the tabular statement with which we have been favoured, but we have purposely suppressed the names of the polling districts and indicated them by arbitrary letters instead. It will be noted that tabulated alongside the electorate and supporter figures are the comparative membership totals for years ending April 5th, 1924, 1925 and 1926 (to date).

Place	Elec- Est. Lab.		1924			1925			1926		
	torate.	Supps.	Men	Wo'n.	Tl.	M.	W.	T.	M.	W.	T.
X ...	575	250	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	11	61
A ...	777	450	33	8	41	29	4	33	20	2	22
H ...	367	190	0	0	0	0	0	0	22	12	34
L ...	305	140	16	10	26	10	3	13	12	8	20
F ...	293	170	34	16	50	37	12	49	41	14	55
Y ...	316	170	6	3	9	12	10	22	14	9	23
M ...	288	180	16	19	35	15	22	37	23	35	58
O ...	854	330	8	2	10	13	7	20	24	4	28
P ...	1,476	800	4	0	4	47	84	131	50	93	143
A ...	320	160	4	1	5	8	4	12	13	3	16

ABOUT LABOUR PAPERS

Read this to your Local Labour Party.

Why should we desire all the burden, machinery, yes and the padding, plus the journalistic incubus in a wage sense, of the normal provincial paper? We believe there is a great future before Labour provincial journalism; that this wing of Labour is yet only in its infancy, but that if it is to succeed it must strike out on its own original lines, defy all precedents, and be as original in its form, as it is divided from its enemies by its principles.

There is the question first of all of get-up. Why on earth should Labour need a huge and many-paged sheet such as the Capitalist issues.

* * *

Labour papers must be smaller and there must be more of them. They will contain propaganda matter and news principally, with a very contracted advertisement revenue, and if the wisest counsels prevail they will form part and parcel of the machinery of the

Party; to be distributed through its collectors rather than by and through the ordinary wholesale channels.

A genuine live paper eagerly read from week to week or month to month need actually not consist in the beginning of more than one quarto sheet printed both sides—we would even say an octavo sheet.

In these days of broadcasting, picture palaces, and abundant literature, the little pungent paper with the punch can be what the submarine is to the battleship; and it is precisely that comparison which we wish to point to as good for Labour papers. We would advocate that every Labour centre, not necessarily the Divisional Party, should seek to get its own organ, but let it be the humble and effective one involving no great financial risk, nor journalistic salary, but such as can be pocketed and pushed from door to door or in field or factory, and on any and every occasion where the Labour missionaries go forth.

"The Labour Organiser,"
December, 1925.



WHY NOT
RUN A
PERFUME
STALL?

YOUR BAZAAR!!

Attractive
& profitable lines.

❖ SACHETS ❖
for the children to sell at 1^d & 3^d.

CONCENTRATED OTTO PERFUMES
many fine varieties in dainty & elegant flasks.

EAU-DE-COLOGNE, GLYCERINE & ROSE-WATER
etc., etc.

SAMPLES
AND
PRICES
ON APPLICATION.

EVERYTHING
OF
FIRST RATE
QUALITY

R.T. HARRISON,
34 CORRIE RD.
CLIFTON,
MANCHESTER.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

ARTICLE 3.

In our two previous articles we dealt fully with the question of the eligibility and selection of candidates, and also with the question of the policy on which the Local Elections should be fought.

The next matter is the question of the dates on which the Local Elections will take place. This year there will be no County Council Elections, for, unlike Municipal Boroughs (Provincial) where one-third of the Councillors retire annually, County Councillors are elected altogether and sit for a period of three years (Local Government England and Wales Act, 1888, Section 2, Sub-section 2 (d)). The first election for County Councils took place in 1889, and 1925 was the date of the last of those

Proceeding.

1. Notice of Election.
2. Receipt of Nomination Papers.
3. Sending notice of decision as to validity of Nomination Papers.
4. Making out Statement as to persons nominated.
5. Withdrawal of Candidates.
6. Notice of Poll.
7. Day of Election.

For the present year the dates are the first Monday in April being Easter list :—

Proceeding.

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2. Receipt of Nomination Papers.
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triennial elections, being the seventeenth since the Councils were established.

The dates for the elections of Board of Guardians, and Rural and District Councils, and Parish Councils are laid down, unlike those for Municipal and County Councils, by rules framed under the authority of Act of Parliament, and not by the Acts themselves. Separate rules have been framed for Metropolitan Borough Councils, and the dates were amended by an alteration of rules last year. A list of all these Rules will be found published this month in our article under "Law and Practice." In the case of Board of Guardians in or out of London, and Urban and Rural Councils, the following table of dates is prescribed :—

Time.

Not later than the second Friday in March, or, if the first Monday in April is Easter Monday, the first Friday in March.

Not later than twelve o'clock at noon on the following Thursday.

Not later than the following Friday.

Not later than the following Saturday.

Not later than twelve o'clock at noon on the following Tuesday.

Five clear days at least before day of Election.

The first Monday in April, or, if that is Easter Monday, the last Monday in March; or, in either case, such other day not being earlier than the preceding Saturday, or later than the following Wednesday, as may for special reasons be fixed by the County Council.

one week earlier than usual owing to Monday, and the following is a tabular

Time.

To be published not later than 5th March.

Not later than 12 noon on the 11th March.

Not later than 12th March.

Not later than 13th March.

Not later than 16th March.

Five clear days at least before the dates mentioned below.

29th March, or any day between the 27th March and the 31st March, if so fixed by the County Council.

Workers will of course remember that as a certain discretion as to dates lies with the County Council, early information should be sought.

Proceeding.

1. Parish Meeting for the Election.

2. Withdrawal of Candidates after Meeting.

3. Notice of Poll.

4. Day of Poll.

Regarding the dates for Parish Council Elections the following table is laid down in the rules:—

Time.

The first Monday after the Tenth day of March, or, if the first Monday in April is Easter Monday, the first Monday after the Third day of March; or, in either case, such other day not being earlier than the preceding Saturday, or later than the following Wednesday, as may for special reasons be fixed by the County Council.

Not later than twelve o'clock at noon on the Tuesday following the Thursday after the Parish Meeting for the Election.

Five clear days at least before day of Poll.

The first Monday in April, or, if that is Easter Monday, the last Monday in March; or, in either case, such other day not being earlier than the preceding Saturday, or later than the following Wednesday, as may for special reasons be fixed by the County Council.

And now we come to preparation for the contest. There is no class of Election which differs so widely regarding the nature of the contests that may be entered into as do the elections we are discussing. It is possible in a populous Urban area to develop almost the full machinery of a Parliamentary Election and at the other end of the scale we get the humble and possibly poorly attended Parish meeting where not enough electors may turn up to constitute a full Parish Council even when all present have been elected (the number by-the-by which may be elected for a Parish Council is not less than 5 nor no more than 15 as may be fixed by the County Council, in addition to a chairman).

We are not in this article going to lay down any methods under which we think election contests of such varying natures should be conducted. Some few general directions alone should be necessary and local workers should resolve themselves to an endeavour to run these local elections as nearly as funds and resources will permit to the Parliamentary efforts in which they have no doubt been engaged in the past. We are bang up against those friends

who seek to belittle and pooh-pooh local election effort, and can only find time for Parliamentary Elections. In the building of a solid Socialist Movement the Local Elections will be found the more important. Skilfully conducted, it is possible to arouse almost the same enthusiasm, and the aim should be to poll a definitely higher number of votes than were polled at the General Election, or computed to be polled for the same area. If this objective is aimed at the Party will come out of the trial with renewed strength and increased resources.

The next point is that in fighting these elections we mustn't lose the advantages of attack. True we have to spend time in explaining the Party's views and policy, but vigorous and sustained attack on the enemy's principles, actions and records, arouses interest and turns the ear of the electorate to what we have to say. Goodness knows there will not be a District Council or a Board of Guardians or even a Parish Council in the whole country whose Tory and Liberal members will not have been committed to hostile acts against the workers and anti-social actions which we can expose.

Our third point is that these elections must not be purely men's affairs. The extent to which good Women's Committees can be got to work will be the measure of your prospects for victory. There is of course an even higher percentage of women electors at local elections than at Parliamentary Elections. Therefore, women in any case will be giving attention to these elections, and often it is that their interests are more deeply concerned by the acts of local bodies than that of Parliament itself—witness Housing, Health Administration, Education, Poor Relief, etc.

With these hints and remarks we refer our readers to the many articles and hints which have appeared in the "Labour Organiser" on the actual conduct of elections. A great step forward was taken at the Municipal Elections last November, and it is now for the Spring Elections to prove that Labour's advance has been general and all along the line.

STICK IT OUT.

When your world's about to fall
And your back's against the wall,
When you're facing wild retreat and rout—

When it seems that nought can stop it,
All your pleas and plans can't stop it—
Get a grip upon yourself—and stick it out.

Any craven fool can quit,
But a man with pluck and grit
Will hold until the very final shout.
In the snarling teeth of sorrow
He will laugh and say: "To-morrow
The luck will change, I guess. Stick it out."

The luck does change. You know it.
All the records prove and show it,
And the men who win are men who
strangle doubt,

Who never hesitate nor swerve,
Who have grit and guts and nerve
And whose motto is: Play hard, and
stick it out!

So you, when things go wrong,
And you think you can't last long—
That you've got to quit, nor wait the
final bout,

Smile—smile at your beholders,
Clench your teeth and square your
shoulders—

And fight! You'll win if you will but
stick it out.

By E. LEAMY, in "The Land Worker"
for February.

Raising Money?

We invite your enquiries for
MONEY-RAISING PRINTING.

Tickets, large or small, in
books, rolls or pads. Also
Printing for Bazaars, Carnivals,
Fetes, etc.

**Order your Holiday Shoot
Tickets NOW.**

**Perry, Son & Lack, Ltd.,
SPECIALITY PRINTERS.
20 Lowfield Street, Dartford.**

A LESSON FROM MANCHESTER.

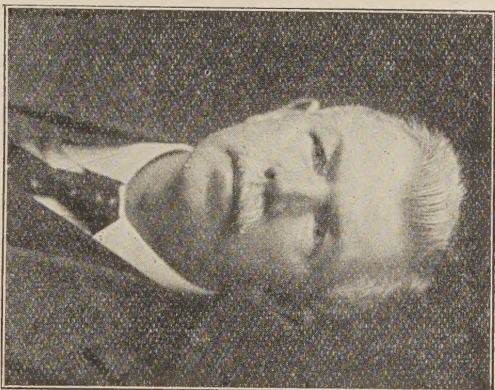
On the two following pages we reproduce a portion of an excellent little three-fold circular printed on stiff card which is used by Councillor A. James, Mr. Clynes' agent in the Miles Platting Division of Manchester. We have omitted the third fold which is a tear-off application form which may be signed by either one or up to four persons at the same address, and the reverse side of which is printed with the agent's address in order that the application may be used as a post card if desired.

Mr. James tells us that the method adopted is to leave a card with every householder who has been found to consistently promise Labour at the canvasses, and for this purpose the Party are taking the last two General Election and Municipal canvass returns.

The cards are left in the householder's possession for not more than a week, and the canvasser then re-visits for results. The names of those persons who hand back a card with a contribution are handed over to the respective ward secretaries.

We note that the canvasser is paid 25 per cent. commission on the gross amount collected. There is no doubt that many of our friends will be interested in this scheme practised and recommended as it is by one of the most experienced and successful agents in the Party.

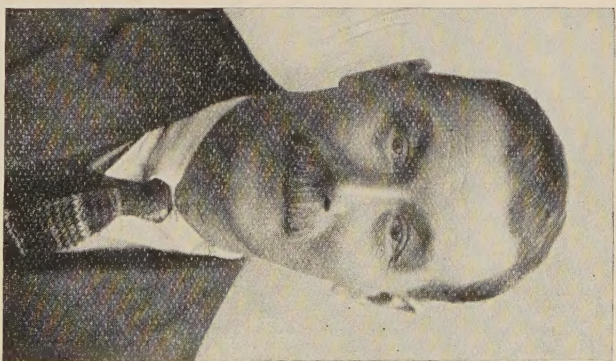
PLATTING LABOUR PARTY



RT. HON. J. R. CLYNES, M.P.

Labour Party Office :

Labour Hall, Enoch Street, Miles Platting



COUNCILLOR A. JAMES

THE PARTY AGENT,

Can be consulted any morning before 9.45 and any evening between 6.30 and 7.45.

LABOUR HALL,
ENOCH STREET,
MILES PLATTING.

DEAR FRIENDS,

At successive Elections our Canvassers have reported your pledged support of the Labour Candidates. My Committee appreciate fully this support, and with confidence invite you to Membership of the Party.

Needless to say the Labour Party stands for a New Social Order in which privilege will have no place.

IT STRIVES.

1.—To give effect as far as may be practicable to the principles from time to time approved by the Party Conference;

2.—To secure for the producers by hand or by brain the full fruits of their industry, and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible, upon the basis of the common ownership of the means of production and the best obtainable system of popular administration and control of each industry or service;

3.—Generally to promote the Political, Social, and Economic Emancipation of the People, and more particularly of those who depend directly upon their own exertions by hand or by brain for the means of life.

INTER DOMINION.

4.—To co-operate with the Labour organisations in the Dominions and Dependencies with a view to promoting the purposes of the Party and to take common action for the promotion of a higher standard of social and economic life for the working population of the respective countries.

INTERNATIONAL.

5.—To co-operate with the Labour organisations in other countries, and to assist in organising a Federation of Nations for the maintenance of Freedom and Peace, for the establishment of suitable machinery for the adjustment and settlement of International Disputes by Conciliation or Judicial Arbitration, and for such International Legislation as may be practicable.

If you believe in these objects we cordially invite you into membership, for which the subscription is a minimum of one shilling per annum, payable quarterly if desired. Sign your name on the application form, which will be called for in a few days by our Canvassers. Members of your household above the age of 16 years are eligible for membership.

Yours sincerely,

ALFRED JAMES,

Party Agent.

PROPAGANDA WITH A KICK!

Mr. W. MILES

Formerly a Derbyshire Miner, and Labour Agent in East Islington for five years, is now booking engagements for

**SPECIAL AND ORIGINAL
LECTURES, PROPAGANDA AND
ORGANISING MISSIONS,**

for long or short periods

SPECIAL LIST OF SUBJECTS:

"THE MINER'S LIFE & WORK,"

Illustrated by 100 slides, showing the conditions and home life of the Miner (humorous, tragic and thought-provoking), recommended by Frank Hodges and R. H. Tawney.

THE "GAP" IN EDUCATION,

A human story with a plea for continuity in Education.

EDUCATION & SOCIAL CHANGES.

THE KRUSCHEN FEELING IN POLITICS.

WHY LIBS. AND TORIES RELY UPON "RED" SENSATIONS.

MIRTH AND PROPAGANDA,

Showing W. Miles in

The Troubles and Trials of HENRY DUBB,

Requiring the Assistance of three Local Ladies and three Gentlemen for two hours' screaming fun and propaganda.

Write :-

W. MILES,

16 Highbury Grove, LONDON, N.5.

LAW AND PRACTICE

[Under this heading are found brief and chatty explanations of points of commoner interest concerning the Law and Practice of Elections. Readers are invited to suggest points for notice herein, but are reminded that suggestions made may not necessarily be dealt with in the next issue.—Ed.]

ABOUT POLLING AGENTS

The question of whether or no it is advisable or worth while to appoint polling agents is a matter that shall be outside the scope of this article, and is one for consideration at each election, having regard to all the circumstances applying thereto.

"The polling agent, as he is officially called, is the only person on the day of the poll who has the opportunity of watching on behalf of a candidate the proceedings within the Polling Station. It is his duty not only to see that personation is prevented, but to see that the provisions of the Ballot Act are enforced by the Presiding Officer." (Wooding's "Parliamentary Elections")

The choice and instruction of polling agents is a matter of great importance if they are to be used at all, because an uninstructed or tactless agent can do an infinite amount of harm inside a polling station. The purpose of this article, however, is primarily to indicate the candidate or election agent's title to appoint polling agents, and the functions that appertain to them after appointment.

The number of polling agents varies with the class of election. In Parliamentary Elections, Borough Council Elections (other than Metropolitan Boroughs), and in County Council Elections, the provisions of the Ballot Act, 1872, apply in full.

Strangely enough, however, these provisions are not quite so explicit as they might be, and the number of polling agents that may be appointed is still a matter of some doubt. The title to appoint polling agents and their right to attend all depends upon Rule 21 contained in the First Schedule to the Act, which reads as follows :-

"The returning officer shall appoint a presiding officer to preside at each station, and the officer so appointed shall keep order at his station, shall regulate the number of electors to be

admitted at a time, and shall exclude all other persons except the clerks, the agents of the candidates, and the constables on duty."

There are other rules which we shall refer to presently which incidentally confirm the right of attendance, but nothing is said here about the number of agents that may be appointed. But in the First Schedule of the Corrupt Practices Act, 1883, it is laid down that "one polling agent in each polling station and no more," may be legally employed for payment. Authorities differ on the point here mentioned, and while one authority boldly declares that the number of unpaid personation agents who may be appointed is unlimited, another suggests that the number should not be unreasonable and that the Returning Officer would be justified in refusing admission to an excessive number of agents. So much then for the above elections.

With regard to Metropolitan Borough Council Elections, Board of Guardians' Elections (in and outside London), Urban and Rural District Council Elections, and Parish Council Polls different rules apply. When these bodies were established the Ballot Act was applied with "adaptations" and modifications which might be made by "Rules" framed by the then Local Government Board. These rules are of considerable importance, and for the benefit of new readers we again repeat the list of same which we published in our July issue, 1922, as follows:—

The Parish Councillors Election Order, 1901 (Statutory Rules Order, 1901, No. 2).

The Parish Councillors (Small Parishes) First Election Order, 1898 (S.R.O. 1898, No. 576).

The Rural District Councillors Election Order, 1918 (S.R.O. 1918, No. 2).

The Urban District Councillors Election Order, 1898 (S.R.O. 1898, No. 1).

The Guardians (Outside London) Election Order, 1898 (S.R.O. 1898, No. 4).

The Guardians (London) Election Order, 1898 (S.R.O. 1898, No. 15).

The Metropolitan Borough Councillors Election Order, 1903 (S.R.O. 1903, No. 160).

The Local Elections (Alteration of Rules) Order, 1919, No. 206).

The Metropolitan Borough Councillors (Alteration of Rules) Order, 1919 (S.R.O. 1919, No. 1223).

The Local Elections (Alteration of Rules) Order, 1925 (S.R.O. 1925, No. 30).

In each of the elections just named the number of polling agents that may be appointed are limited by a Rule which reads as follows:—

"If there are only two candidates, each of them may, in writing, appoint one polling agent for each polling station, who may be paid or unpaid. If there are more than two candidates, any number of candidates, being not less than one-third of the whole number of candidates, may, in writing, appoint one polling agent for each polling station, who may be paid or unpaid. Any such appointment shall be delivered at the Office of the Returning Officer not less than two clear days before the day of the poll. Except as aforesaid, no polling agent, whether paid or unpaid, shall be appointed for the purposes of the election."

We can now turn to some other aspects of the matter. Polling agents once appointed and admitted have the same powers at each election. Thus a personation agent in a Rural Council Election possesses just the same rights as one in a Parliamentary Election. The votes of Jews, of blind persons, or other of similar nature known as "the list of votes marked by the Presiding Officer" must all be marked in the "presence" (if he is there) of the polling agent. The latter may also require certain prescribed questions to be put to suspected voters, and the necessary packages at the close of the poll must be made up and sealed in the presence of the polling agent who may affix his seal thereto.

There are one or two matters that are not generally known, thus Rule 51 of the Ballot Act reads as follows:—

"A candidate may himself undertake the duties which any agent of his, if appointed, might have undertaken, or may assist his agent in the performance of such duties, and may be present at any place at which his agent may in pursuance of this Act attend."

The effect of the above provision is that a candidate may actually relieve his personation agent during the course of the day or may stay with him and assist and guide him with his functions. The same privileges do not extend to the election agent.

By Rule 53 "if a polling agent dies or becomes incapable of acting during

the time of the election (i.e., of the poll), the candidate may appoint another agent.

By Section 53 the polling agent is required to make a Statutory Declaration of Secrecy before the opening of the poll and finally, for his appointment to be valid, it must reach the Returning Officer at least one clear day (two days are required in some elections—see above) before the opening of the poll.

WHY NOT HAVE A PENCIL DAY?

Pencils with special lettering for
Bazaars, Sports, Building
Funds, etc.



GRETA PENCIL MILLS, KESWICK

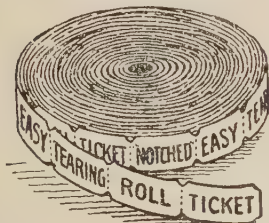
Price list on application.

ALFRED WILLIAMSON,

North Mill Ticket Works,
ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE.

ROLL TICKETS

for checking the receipts for
REFRESHMENTS, BILLIARDS,
CARDS, etc.



NOTCHED TICKETS for Easy Tearing Supplied
to Order.

Official Badges and all kinds of Printing for
Shows, Athletic Sports, Galas, etc.

Tel. Add : "Tickets, Ashton-under-Lyne."
Tel. 320, Ashton-under-Lyne.
Established 1835.

THE ORGANISATION CONFERENCE HOW IT HELPS

One of the aids to organisation of which more use might be made and which brings into happiest combination and consultation the National Organising resources of the Party with those of the Local Parties is that of the "Organisation Conference." As a movement we are inordinately fond of Conferences and a proposal for a Conference on almost any point of policy will invariably meet with ready approval. But the Organisation Conference—the Conference at which we might consider the making and building of the movement that will make our policies possible—is not so general an affair; yet we have found it one of the most effective methods of sensing a Party's strength, strengthening the weak spots, and adding power to stronger ones.

It does not always occur to local officers that the daily, weekly and monthly grind of business and crowd agendas, together with the absorption of propaganda efforts, never gives the constituency the opportunity to consider its progress as a whole. In the incessant round of correspondence, resolutions and immediate affairs there is no time for a wider view of the field or even for the consideration of whether the right direction in organisation is being taken.

The Organisation Conference which we have found most valuable is a grand gathering of the Executive Committees, Local Parties and workers at a meeting where the sole business is that of stocktaking and discussion of constituency organisation in all its aspects. There must, of course, be direction for such discussions and it is just here that the District Organiser of the National Labour Party functions in helpful form. The writer prefers an Executive Meeting or consultation with the officers prior to meeting a Conference of the kind named. Here the threads are gathered together, the weak spots and failures pointed out, together with such plans as have been formulated for the future.

With these facts before him the representative of the Head Office of the Party is able to lead off with a helpful address, encouraging, stimulating and constructive. After this there might be

questions followed by discussion and district reports. There is always abundant opportunity for tendering advice, correcting misapprehension, and for doing something to weld the Parties' efforts ready for a mightier push. There are occasions when the Executive of a Party feels the necessity of getting greater support or of procuring understanding for some new policy or line of organisation—such, for instance, as a membership campaign. The sympathy and effort of the rank and file can be roused in such Conferences.

We have spoken of them as opportunities for stocktaking. But it is also here that the sage organiser and wise Central Secretary spots likely fresh workers and young officers. The Organisation Conference is, in fact, a combination of stocktaking, a council of war and an army review. Anyway it pays.

The I.L.P. Information Committee are in need of financial help. The work of this Committee is of extreme value to the Labour Movement, and we should be extremely sorry to hear of a limitation of its activities through lack of money. The last financial year closed with a deficit of nearly £400, and it is suggested that if a number of friends would contribute 5/- or even 2/6 the Department would be grateful and considerable relief would result. May we urge our readers to send this small amount immediately on reading this. We would point out that apart from the "Notes for Speakers" of very great value, and the preparation of Study Circles syllabuses, the Department undertakes extensive research work on such subjects as Agriculture, Finance, Empire Problems, etc., and holds itself in readiness to give information and assist Labour M.P.s and public men and women on many subjects.

We would draw the attention of our readers to the advertisement of Mr. R. T. Harrison on another page. We have by us some dainty samples of the goods advertised, and can personally vouch for their quality and possibilities for re-sale. We would strongly advise our readers interested in bazaars and sales of work to write for terms and price list. There is a good profit to be made.

A LESSON FROM NUNEATON

Frank Smith's New Year's Greetings to the Nuneaton Labour Party was as original in conception as it was forceful in expression and mountain-moving in its force and faith. Four-page quarto in size, the front page bore the following message:—

Dear Comrades,

My heart's wish is that I could grasp you by the hand individually and personally express to you my keen appreciation of the splendid way you have all rallied to Labour's flag throughout 1925; and the confidence I feel that the year 1926 will be marked by a still closer comradeship, and a more rapid advance towards our goal.

What is our Goal? Not merely a struggle for the Supremacy of a Political Party, important as that is! Our Goal is nothing less than to secure conditions of life that will mean the general uplift of humanity. The abolition of conditions that produce Poverty, Unemployment, and Preventable Sickness, with all the worry, want and anxiety these horrors bring in their train.

Ever since those memorable days in October, 1924, when, in response to your call, it was my privilege to share with you in that glorious struggle, our relationship has been marked by a personal realisation of a continued and growing comradeship. And this has been, and will be, a constant source of inspiration to me; and an incentive to place every power I possess on the altar of service for God and humanity. In this high purpose I feel—nay I know—you are all with me heart and soul, and with such a bond as this binding us together we cannot fail to reach our goal.

Forward, then for 1926, with no bitterness in our hearts for those who may oppose us. Demanding Justice for those who toil, we will act justly to all, thereby proving the worthiness of our cause and the sincerity of our purpose.

Ever yours,

FRANK SMITH.

The second page addressed "To Those Who Have Ears To Hear," was yet another fighting call deep in inspiration and mighty in argument. The third page, "Women to the Fore," contained practical advice on women's organisation from the pen of that indefatigable electioneer, Miss Ellen I.

Champness. The fourth page was argument and fact of equal quality to the first three pages. And there is a final thought worth reproducing. It is:—

ANOTHER STEP TOWARDS VICTORY.

The splendid spirit exhibited throughout the party in the organising and carrying through of the recent Bazaar has demonstrated what you are capable of doing.

I have had a brain-wave! Which, if you will back me, as I believe you will, will enable us to double our active membership within three months and quadruple our efficiency as a fighting force.

"I want a personal postcard from a thousand comrades—men and women—simply saying *'you can count on me.'*" Followed by your name and address. As, and when, I get these I propose to send the writers a reply giving particulars of what to do and how to do it.

It is something that *everyone* can do, at no cost, and with a very little expenditure of time.

Will you do this? I believe you will.

In order to save you cost of postage, I suggest you write your post card as early as possible, hand it to your local secretary, who will pass them on to WALTER LEWIS. These will be forwarded to me, and then you'll get my reply.

Now then comrades, get busy with those post cards and 1926 will see a big advance. F.S.

Of course, the postcards come to hand, not of course in the floods they *might* do, but slowly, and later with a run, and the answer they receive is this:—

My Dear Comrade,

Your ready response to my New Year's greetings rejoices my heart. You tell me that I may "count" on you—I do, comrade, and I will. And, together with other like-minded comrades who have responded, we shall do great things in 1926.

The proposal I have to make is simply this:—*that each Nuneaton comrade shall secure a new member for the Party during the coming month.*

In view of the fact that 12,679 men and women in Nuneaton voted Labour at the General Election, this should not be difficult.

Then, if during the following month, while *"the iron is hot,"* there is a combined effort by which each member shall bring in another, you will see what a glorious advance we shall make. And, if this effort is kept up during the year, we should be in a conquering position at any time the call comes.

Will you send me a postcard with the name and address of your new recruit as soon as you have succeeded?

I enclose you a letter which you can present to your proposed new recruit by way of introducing the question of membership, and I will send you more if you wish.

Awaiting with confidence your further reply.

With heartiest wishes and thanks.

Ever yours sincerely,

FRANK SMITH.

Mr. or Mrs.

And this is the enclosure the "new comrade" receives. We hope their numbers may be legion.

Dear Friend,

I would like to be able to make a personal call upon you, but as this is not possible just now, I am taking advantage of the kind services of the comrade who brings this letter from, and for, me, in the hope that we may be able to enlist your active support and co-operation in the work and objects of the Labour Party.

Our comrade will tell you of the good work now being done in the Nuneaton Division, and with your consent, will enable you to link up with us.

Will you cheer our hearts and strengthen our hands by joining our active ranks?

I hope to hear from our comrade that his call upon you has been successful.

Wishing you a joyous and prosperous year.

Very sincerely yours,

FRANK SMITH.

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34 Corrie Road, Clifton, Manchester.

AFFILIATED *v.* INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

THE QUALITIES AND RIGHTS OF MEMBERSHIP.

ARTICLE 2.

We left over from last month the fourth question of our correspondent as follows:—

"4. Is correspondence from the National Labour and Divisional Party dealt with by the secretary of the Local Party or the secretaries of the individual Men's and Women's Sections?

Finance. Who is the individual men's subscriptions paid to—the secretary or the secretary of the Local Party? The exact allocation of the subscriptions?

Any other particulars re the Men's Section will be greatly appreciated, also the position between the individual and affiliated members."

Here then is presented a pickle into which Parties are apt to drift where the relationships between the parts of the Party are ill-defined.

The supreme Party in any Division is the Divisional Labour Party and correspondence on divisional matters from the Head Office of the Party or anywhere else is usually addressed to this quarter. This does not preclude correspondence to Local Parties, or even to Ward Committees and Individual Sections. General circulars are often sent in this manner, and there is nothing whatever to prevent the minutest section of a Party having correspondence with the Head Office of the Party, or having its own correspondence with speakers and such like.

In County Divisions Local Parties are the next in importance to Divisional Parties. Individual sections are subsidiary to them, and so are the Ward Committees; obviously the tail must not be allowed to wag the dog. So much for paragraph one.

Regarding finance the subscriptions of Individual Members are in the first place the property of the Party. They are not the property of the Individual Section or the Ward Committee, nor in fact does all the money belong to the Local Party. The rules provide that 25 per cent. of each subscription should be sent to the Divisional Party as their share, and that twopence per member per annum, in addition, should be sent to the Divisional Party who will remit the total of these twopences to Headquarters as an affiliation fee.

In practice several arrangements may be come to for the collection of members' contributions. A Local Party may decide to collect its contributions by and through the Individual Sections, through collectors directly appointed, or through the Ward Committees. Which ever course is taken it is necessary to come to an arrangement as to the allocation of the money. No Labour Party rule is laid down because circumstances differ widely, and commonsense and a fair appreciation of the necessities of both Local Parties and the Sections should govern any arrangement arrived at. It is possible to steer an even course between starving the sections on one hand and depriving the Local Party of support on the other hand.

In the case of Polling District Committees where there is no intervening Local Party between them and the Divisional Party the Polling District Committee stands in the same position as a L.L.P., and the apportionment of contributions is the same as between them and the Divisional Party.

It is often asked what are the functions of the Men's and Women's Sections. In the case of Women Sections the functions have become fairly obvious owing to the energy and activities of the Sections that exist. The work of Women Sections is educational, organising and social. Their educational work is primarily among women, so too is their organising work, though Women Sections now in many places undertake a good deal beyond this sphere, from taking charge of some special work in an election to missionary work in country districts. The social work of Women's Sections is chiefly confined to the enjoyment and well-being of members and the raising of additional funds. This summary does not embrace all that Women's Sections do, for in many cases they have become a powerful driving force within the Local Party.

We frankly confess that the activities before the Individual Men's Sections are more narrowed and limited in scope for the simple reason that the Trades Unions already in being are overwhelmingly masculine in their operations and

representation within the Party, and that therefore the great bulk of men have activities already allotted to them. But Men Sections should be used as educational machinery; as recruiters for the army of Individual Membership; as machinery for collecting contributions; and particularly for missionary work among the workers in the workshops and factories. This latter activity is a field which, for geographical reasons, is sometimes difficult to Ward Committees. Individual Members' Sections should not function as Ward Committees, as this shuts out the affiliated member, but the missionary and recruiting opportunities are innumerable as the membership grows, and if Sections all kept busy in these directions the chances of overlapping will be diminished.

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20 Lowfield St., DARTFORD.

Congratulations to the "Barrow Leader" on completing its second year of service to the Workers' Movement.

A circular from the Home Office to Registration Officers, dated 22nd January, encloses copy of Army Council Instruction 627 of 1925, for information only, and as indicating, we presume, that the Army Council have taken the necessary steps to acquaint members of the Army of their opportunities for registration. Any interested reader may consult this circular on sending a stamped addressed envelope to these offices, but the same is interesting solely as showing that thorough steps are taken to acquaint a soldier of his rights and the procedure necessary to obtain them.

PUBLICITY FOR POOR LOCAL LABOUR PARTIES

By Wilfred B. Hargreaves.

"Publicity," to paraphrase a well-known proverb, "we have always with us."

Unfortunately, the chronic lack of funds in many local Labour Parties, and a lack of appreciation of the effectiveness of well-directed and sustained publicity, hamper and mar the efforts of our front bench men in their task of rallying the intelligent members of the community to their, and our, standard, because Labour publicity is often a minus quantity!

For example, sustained and damaging criticism was directed on the present Government's Widows' Pensions, etc., Bill. With adequate support in the country, the Government's attitude would have been considerably modified, and many more of the Bill's anomalies would have been removed. Leaders, front and back bench men, and men of no bench at all, did their utmost to move this rather dull and stupid Government of ours, but the kick from the country was missing, and consequently, Mr. Baldwin got too much of his own way.

How, then, shall we back up the efforts of our men in Parliament? The "Labour Organiser" has consistently, in and out of season, shown us the best way to do it. Run a local Labour newspaper!

Where that cannot be done, and there are many dull and stagnant parts of England yet where it can't, other means of publicity within the reach of any man with a few shillings in his pocket, can be employed. I propose, diffidently, and with the permission of the august Editor of our "Labour Organiser," to show how.

First of all, let us briefly follow the capitalist in his efforts to foist some new cure all upon a long-suffering public. One fine day, we take our favourite walk along some pleasant boulevard, when our eyes are assailed by a large poster, adjuring us to take Smith's salts.

It doesn't explain too much; it doesn't go into detail; it doesn't crowd its print against its border; but quite brightly and pleasantly it prompts us to take Smith's salts; and it does it on such a scale that we can't miss its greeting. So far, so good.

Many thousands of people read that brief compelling message, and believe me, it sinks in somewhat even into stolid British heads. When the owner of one of those heads picks up his daily paper and finds Smith's salts greeting him again, he sits up and begins to take notice.

When, a little later, he sets off for work and sees in a chemist's or grocer's shop a well-got-up package of Smith's salts, he almost looks upon it as an old and familiar friend.

Sooner or later, our stolid Britisher feels a little out of sorts, and, with the lordly privilege of a Britisher, sends his wife, servant or child to bring a package of Smith's salts.

Smith has scored!

Believe me, Mr. Editor, one firm made a million in a few years, and made its goods a household word in six months by publicity such as this. Well, it isn't difficult to imitate Smith in a small and local way.

Paint is 10½d. per lb., turpentine is about 1/3 a pint; a newspaper roll, containing about 100 yards, can be bought for half-a-crown.

A site in any village usually costs 2/6 a year; a set of brushes can be bought for 3/-, and a little practice will give good results.

Good poster paper, in colours, can be bought at cheap rates from any enterprising printer. I have painted (roughly, for I am but an amateur) an advertisement 15 ft. by 5 ft, have had it seen by several thousands of people, and its cost has not been sixpence all told.

Don't make your poster into a hand-bill.

Don't expect the first few will bring results.

Don't crowd too much print on it.

Do make it so that a man going by on a motor car gets your message flying.

Do paste a picture on it whenever you can.

Do back it up with a neatly duplicated explanatory circular.

Do back it up with a window display (if you can, and you can without much difficulty).

Do persistently drive away for twelve months, when, believe me, even the stolid British paterfamilias will sit up, scratch his head, and take notice of you.

A TESTIMONIAL.

Dear Comrade Drinkwater,

May I express to you my personal thanks for the excellent advice, articles, and general get-up of the "Labour Organiser." I always find in it something useful as well as interesting, and look forward eagerly for my monthly copy, so convinced am I that the information contained should be spread through the Movement, I have persuaded my Party to order a copy for each Local Labour Party Secretary, and expect to be amply repaid in better organisation at Local and Parliamentary Elections. Good luck to the "Organiser" and its Editor.

Yours fraternally,
CLAUDE DENScombe.

8 St. Fagans Street,
Caerphilly,
Cardiff.

REVIEWS

"PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION: ITS DANGERS AND DEFECTS." By George Horwill, B.Sc. George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. Price, 6/- net.

Mr. Horwill's new book is one that ought and must find its way to the bookshelf of every Labour organiser and student of electoral methods. Hitherto the advocates of Proportional Representation have had the literature on this subject all to themselves. Mr. Horwill now comes forward with the first book devoted to an exposure of the pretensions and defects of P.R., and he produces a volume well planned in outline, informative, and utterly destructive to the theories he attacks.

There is an unfortunate tendency in the Labour Movement to take too much for granted when a new theory is propounded, and more than one new notion with its catch-phrases has been accepted as the cant of our Movement without sufficient examination. Through these causes P.R. has secured a considerable hold within the Labour and Socialist Movements, but we believe that Mr.

Horwill's facts and arguments, mercifully presented as they are, will do much to secure a saner outlook on the question.

Labour organisers in particular require to read and digest the book under notice. As the past working of P.R. in certain countries is unfolded and its other schemes are examined the reader perceives clearly how destructive to the unity and advance of the Labour Party Proportional Representation would be. A chapter to which we have seen some objection is that in which Mr. Horwill examines the motives behind the championship of P.R. in certain quarters. We ourselves feel that this chapter is justified and that its conclusions are sound and the moral, later drawn, that P.R. is essentially a resort of reactionaries is well supported by facts and quotations.

"Sixteen years of P.R. Elections have failed to produce a single case where the largest majority Party governed with the consent of the majority of electors . . ."

"In Belgium after 20 years of P.R. 45 different groups were formed to elect 96 Members to Parliament."

These two things are among the facts to which Mr. Horwill draws attention, and he rightly asks :—

"In view of the delicate mechanism of our complex but massive social and industrial system, is this the time to turn the centre and key to it over to conflicting minorities who will be excused the task of obtaining the assent of the majority mind?"

"Proportional Representation : Its Dangers and Defects" is, therefore, a book which we can thoroughly recommend to our readers, and indeed we appreciate that some of them who have thoughtlessly espoused the cause of P.R. will stand in need of the armoury of facts and arguments which Mr. Horwill has assembled for the use of opponents to this delusive change.

The book is supplemented by a number of useful appendices and a thorough mastery of all the systems advocated is obtainable from its pages.

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W. W. BORRETT,
Manager

A LESSON FROM CARMARTHEN.

One of the methods of building up a Party, and a Party vote, which we have before advocated in these columns is by consistent and sustained effort directed individually at the known Trade Unionists and known sympathisers.

A good example of how persuasion might be applied in these directions is afforded by the following specimens of literature issued recently at Carmarthen. Circular No. 1 was one issued purely among the railwaymen; Circular No. 2 is a personal appeal sent round to all known sympathisers, while Circular No. 3 is one sent to secretaries of various organisations following the Municipal Elections. Carmarthen is an outpost of the Labour Movement, and it is gratifying therefore to find something in the work of our friends there, both to commend, and to put forward as an example to others.

CIRCULAR No. 1.

ASSOCIATED SOCIETY OF LOCOMOTIVE
ENGINEERS AND FIREMEN.

NATIONAL UNION OF RAILWAYMEN.

To the Railwaymen of Carmarthen.

31st October, 1925.

Fellow Workers,

We find it our duty to place before your notice the following considerations concerning the Municipal Elections next Monday.

In Carmarthen the employing and professional classes entirely constitute the Town Council; the policy of their administration has been completely in their own class interests and definitely opposed to you, who, as workers, have the most to gain from progressive measures; the conditions in Carmarthen of housing, sanitation, footpaths, and public lavatories will easily illustrate what we mean; their disgrace is notorious and the need for change urgent.

We are convinced that no improvements can be expected from the Town Council so long as it is composed in its entirety of representatives of the classes who are not workers.

An opportunity will arise on Monday next to elect three working-class members to the Town Council; Nicholas and Thomas are railwaymen, and Charles is a gas-worker; *we unhesitatingly recommend you to vote for these working men*, and to use all the

influence you possess to persuade your relatives and friends to do the same.

In the Eastern ward Nicholas and Thomas, and in the Western ward Charles, are opposed by retiring Councillors whose records while previously in office abundantly show them to be out of contact and sympathy with working-class needs.

We earnestly appeal to you on this occasion to support *your own class*; Nicholas and Thomas and Charles are good Trade Unionists, who work amongst you every day, from their own experience they know your opinions, their needs are your needs, and they look upon public questions exactly as you do yourself.

Railwaymen: in the Eastern ward vote for Nicholas and Thomas; in the Western ward vote for Charles, and thus do something towards ending the supremacy and domination of your local enemies.

Yours faithfully,

D. OWEN.

T. JENKINS.

J. E. CLAXTON.

CIRCULAR No. 2.

CARMARTHEN LABOUR PARTY.

44 Little Water Street,
Carmarthen.

1st December, 1925.

Dear Sir,

I am given to understand that your political views and interest agree with the objects of the Labour Movement.

At present your name is not upon the membership roll of the Carmarthen Labour Party, and consequently I venture to enclose a membership card for the same.

If you agree to join the Party, as I hope you will, kindly remit your entrance fee to either the Secretary at 50 Lammas Street, the Treasurer at 12 St. David Street, or to myself.

The members would be gratified and encouraged by your joining the Party as it would become strengthened by your adherence, and if you would undertake active public membership the members would feel the Party to achieve greater local prestige, although that is a feature which we do not press as for business, professional, or private reasons you may feel the responsibilities of ordinary membership to be sufficient for your taste.

Should you care to address the Party upon any subject connected with the

movement in which you may have a special personal interest or special knowledge, we shall be delighted to place an early opportunity before you for that purpose, for we feel strongly that your presence and influence would assist us in many ways.

If a mistake has been made in sending you this appeal I trust you will forgive me and accept my apology, as I am confident you will appreciate that I am not trying to approach by this means any unknown convert, but those whose sympathies are believed to be with our work and whose aid we in Carmarthen so urgently require.

Yours faithfully,
A. F. ROFE, Organiser.

CIRCULAR No. 3.

CARMARTHEN LABOUR PARTY.

44 Little Water Street,

Carmarthen.

1st December, 1925.

Dear Comrade Secretary,

I shall be thankful if you will be good enough to read this letter to your members upon the first opportunity, as the year of 1925 is now closing.

The Party is fairly satisfied with the result of the recent Municipal Election, as it clearly showed that if only a sufficient measure of working-class unity can be obtained, the Party will in time be able to wrest the control of local administration from the employing and professional classes who to-day possess it in Carmarthen.

The Election also proved that the efforts of those people who in the past have continually voted for working-class candidates and policy has not been in vain, and our enemies recognise as their greatest menace the steadily growing sense of class consciousness by the Carmarthen workers; accordingly they are already seriously considering how best they can destroy it at the next electoral struggle.

The Election is over with *one* councillor to our credit, and our work is now entering upon a more intensive stage; *Charles must be backed up*, and ammunition supplied for him to discharge at his crowd of enemies that confront him at every meeting of the Town Council. He can be assisted in many ways, but best of all by the consolidated pressure behind him of working class opinion, and that is just where you and your members could exert their influence most usefully to us all.

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As a prelude to bigger things please join the Party as an individual member, and try to get every one of your own members to do the same, and after that *attend every meeting of the party* which is held. We want *your* wishes expressed and we want our Councillor to execute them, as you are aware he is no aspirant for honours, but is just a plain man who is up against a big job, but we assure you he is anxious to do all that is humanly possible.

Very shortly the Annual Conference of this very much alive Party will be held. You will be duly notified, and *we hope to see you and your members there*. When the notification reaches you please round up as many of your members as you can to attend, and get *some of them on the Executive Committee of the Party*.

In the meantime membership cards can be obtained of myself or at the Secretary's house, 50 Lammas Street, Carmarthen. The Treasurer, W. Clarke, of 12 St. David Street, will gladly receive any financial contributions of any amount, and if there is any point upon which information is desired, any of us will be glad to visit your meeting at any time.

Wishing you and your members every success.

Yours fraternally,
A. F. ROFE, Party Organiser.

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"I WANT to send my very warm thanks and congratulations on the work which you did in producing the book. It has never been better done, and never, I think, quite so well done. I thought it from first to last a most distinguished bit of craftsmanship." Thus runs a letter from one of the delighted customers of the Blackfriars Press, Ltd., of Albion Street, Leicester, the printers of this journal. We commend this to the notice of all Labour Secretaries and others who have the giving out of printing and are interested in having their work well done, and at the same time in helping forward the funds of the Party.